Serial No. Not Yet Assigned Atty. Doc. No. 2003P12715WOUS

10/589791 !AP6 Rec'd PCT/PTO 17 AUG 2006

ABSTRACT

The microstructure of components, particularly layer systems, deteriorates under excessive thermal and/or mechanical stress. Previous test methods are destructive, parts being cut out of the layer system and being microstructurally analyzed. The inventive method allows a deterioration to be determined by means of special, simple non-destructive measurements that are repeated at specific intervals using a mechanical indenter test, for example.